GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1237
ANSWERED ON:01.08.2005
BAN ON STONE CUTTING
Chakraborty Shri Ajay

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the condition of the Stone artisan in the country particularly in and around Shushunia Hills of West Bengal, has become miserable and making stone artefacts has become very difficult due to ban on stone cutting within a certain limit as imposed by the Government;

(b) if so, whether the Government is considering to make any alternate arrangement for such people;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a) Livelihoods of stone artisans living in and around Shushunia Hills of West Bengal have been affected due to strict enforcement of regulatory measures by the State Government.

(b) & (c) As per the information received from the State of West Bengal, the State Government has already initiated steps to develop the area into an eco-tourism spot where some of the artisans can have alternative source of livelihood. Some other artisans are collectively bringing stones from outside forest area and making artefacts, which are being sold to tourist. Besides above, several forestry and allied works like afforestation and soil conservation measures etc., are also being taken up in the area to provide employment opportunities to the local people.

(d) Question does not arise.